

Regional Transportation Commission

Final Report

Making Progress in Puget Sound

Regional Transportation Commission
PO Box 53010
Bellevue, WA 98015-3010

www.psrtc.wa.gov

What Is the Regional Transportation Commission?



- RTC was created by the Washington State Governor and State Legislature to evaluate **governance** and **funding** for transportation in central Puget Sound.
 - King, Pierce, Snohomish, and Kitsap counties
- Nine commissioners plus the secretary of WSDOT
- Six months of public engagement, research, and evaluation
 - 15 public meetings and two public hearings
 - Over 350 pages of public comment on the draft report submitted by over 80 parties

The RTC final report concludes that bold action is needed...



RTC primary conclusion:

“Our current system of transportation governance delivers inadequate results, and will need fundamental systemic change to meet our state’s transportation needs in the future. At this point, there is no single agency in the region with the ability to meet the overall transportation needs of the region. In order to address regional needs, the system has to be structurally ‘reknit’ at the regional level.”





RTC primary recommendation:

“We recommend that the state legislature create a 15-member Puget Sound Regional Transportation Commission (PSRTC) which has authority and responsibility for planning, prioritizing, and funding all modes of **regional** transportation for the four-county area.”



The Transportation Problem



The Puget Sound region is experiencing severe strain on its transportation system, with 2 contributing factors:

1. A history of underfunding transportation despite rapid growth, and
2. The absence of a **unified regional** transportation governance system.

We have an impending regional transportation crisis!



The Financial Challenge



- Destination 2030 Plan:
 - **\$134 billion** in needed transportation investments
 - **\$72 billion** in committed resources
 - Leaves a **\$62 billion shortage** in funding for regional transportation needs.
- Even if all identifiable revenue sources are tapped, there are inadequate resources available to meet all of the identified needs.





- ✓ Prioritize projects based on regional, systemwide criteria.
- ✓ Explore all available sources to finance transportation, including new taxes and user fees
- ✓ Employ up-to-date technology to institute tolling
 - Manage demand, especially at peak times
and
 - Generate revenue for improvements



The Governance Challenge



➤ The region has been unable to effectively prioritize regional transportation projects on a multimodal basis because there is no governmental entity responsible for prioritizing projects regionally across geography and modes.

The public needs to know:

- Who is in charge?
- What do I get for my \$\$?





Creation of a new regional transportation entity:

- ✓ 15 members—nine elected and six appointed
- ✓ King, Pierce, Snohomish, and Kitsap county boundaries
- ✓ **Planning, prioritizing, and funding *all modes*** of regional transportation
- No new bureaucracy—combining and reshaping agencies we already have





PSRTC: authority and scope

- Transportation *and* land use
- Roads *and* transit
- Strong revenue authority



PSRTC authority and scope:

- Transportation *and* land use
 - PSRTC authorized federally to become the MPO
 - PSRTC authorized by the Legislature to become the RTPO
 - Absorbs planning functions of Puget Sound Regional Council
 - Absorbs planning functions of Sound Transit





PSRTC authority and scope:

- Roads *and* transit
 - Resources should be pooled for multimodal transportation
 - Covers “Roads of statewide significance” and adds new “roads of regional significance”
 - No strict sub-area equity formula—fair prioritization
 - Authority over regional routes of Sound Transit and other transit agencies (agencies retain local control over local routes)





PSRTC authority and scope:

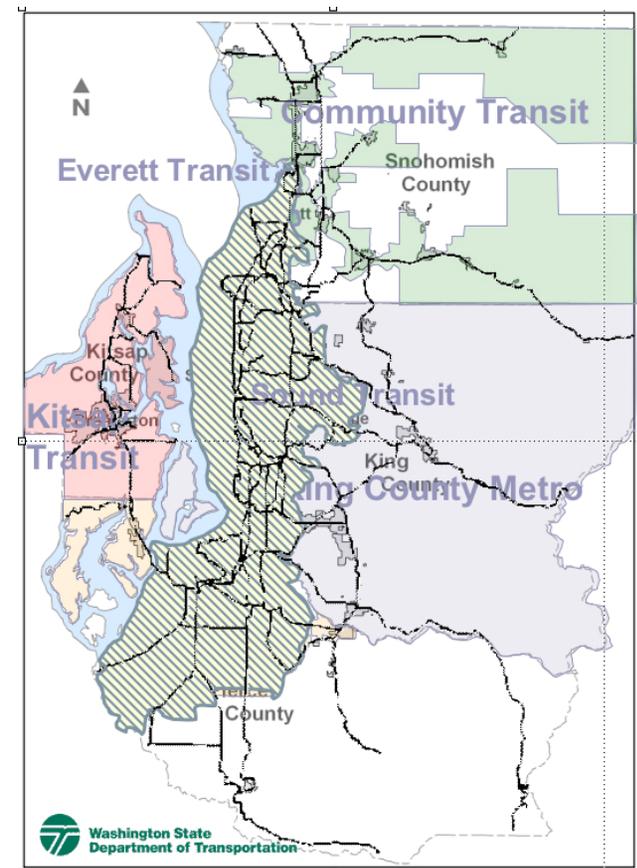
- Strong Revenue authority
 - Responsible for prioritizing projects
 - Ability to levy regional taxes
 - Responsible for user fees, including regional tolls, parking, and fares
 - Gatekeeper role for regional ballot measures





PSRTC structure and boundaries:

- Structure
 - 15-member board—nine elected by district and six appointed by governor
 - Non-partisan and part-time role
- Boundaries
 - King, Pierce, Snohomish, and Kitsap counties
 - Ability for other counties to opt to join in future





- ✓ Conclusion: Destination 2030 and beyond: What must we do to avert the crisis and make progress?
- ✓ Do no harm, but pull no punches.
- ✓ A natural evolution toward regional structure
- ✓ **RTC conclusion: Regional vision, multimodal solutions, and adequate funding are crucial.**



Regional Transportation Commission

Final Report

Making Progress in Puget Sound

Regional Transportation Commission
PO Box 53010
Bellevue, WA 98015-3010

www.psrtc.wa.gov